IN THE CLAIMS:

(A marked-up version of the amended claims is attached to this Amendment.)

Amend Claim 1 as follows:

1. (Amended) A method of handling a large scale structural body in which an opening portion is provided at a roof of a nuclear reactor building, comprising the steps of providing a protective measure for a used fuel pool in a nuclear reactor well, and then carrying the large scale structural body such as a nuclear reactor pressure vessel and an internal reactor structural body out or in through the opening portion.

B2

3. (Amended) A method of claim 1, wherein the protective measure is provided with a cushioning member inside thereof for minimizing the effect of an impact of the large scale structural body.

B4

REMARKS

The objection to the disclosure is noted. Appropriate corrections have been made at pages 2, 3 and 9. The objection to "To" at page 9, line 22 is not well made and is therefore traversed. Applicants believe that "fuels" at page 11 is acceptable but authorize the Examiner to use the singular if all other issues have been resolved in this case.

The rejection of Claims 1-3 under 35 USC § 112, ¶ 2, is traversed, and reconsideration is requested.

Applicants have made several non-limiting changes in the claims in an effort to have them more closely conform to normal U.S. claiming practice. Even if it were true, however, that the claims are generally narrative, that does not equate with them being indefinite. Applicants would disagree that terms such as "treating" and "relaxing" in the context of the present application would not be clearly understood by one skilled in the art. In any event, the undersigned believes that the above amendments should eliminate any formality questions regarding claim structure and phraseology.

The rejection of Claims 1-3 as being anticipated by Hasegawa et al. under 35 USC § 102(b) is traversed, and reconsideration is requested.

The Office Action refers to Fig. 9 (presumably Fig. 9(a) and Fig. 9(b)) and corresponding portions of the specification. It is interesting to note that the Office Action concludes that the Hasegawa et al. patent "discloses the details of this method in his claims." This is the converse of what the patent statute requires. In any event, the Hasegawa et al. patent does not disclose what is claimed in the present application for the following reasons. In Figs. 9(a) and (b), the Hasegawa et al. patent shows a method which uses a cask 41 that receives and stores a shroud 1. The shroud has a weight of about 70 tons as revealed, for example, at column 5, line 47. The shroud is stored in the nuclear reactor pressure vessel 3 for carrying out the shroud from the nuclear reactor building during an exchange. The Hasegawa et al. method is primarily concerned with reducing the amount of exposure which is received by workers from the radioactive internal structure for carrying out of the internal structure of the nuclear reactor from the nuclear reactor building. The Hasegawa et al.

patent, which is assigned to the assignee of the present application, was not concerned with dropping of the shroud during an exchange and thereby damaging the used fuel pool. It is fair to say that the Hasegawa et al. patent does not even remotely mention such a problem or a method for solving it. Indeed, in the Hasegawa et al. patent, since no protective wall is provided, accidental dropping of the cask 41 storing the shroud during the exchange, can cause the cask 41 to hit and damage the used fuel pool disposed near the nuclear reactor and thereby cause a significant environmental problem inasmuch as the trajectory of a falling cask cannot be controlled or guided.

Simply stated, the Hasegawa et al. patent is in no way suggestive of a method in which a protective measure is provided for a used fuel pool after which the carrying out of the large scale structural body occurs.

To the extent that the cask 41 of Hasegawa et al. is considered to be equivalent to the RPV shield body 21 in the present application, we would note with regard to Claim 3 that the cushioning member is provided inside the protective measure. Thus, to the extent that the Office Action asserts that the receptacle also inherently provides cushioning impact of the contained internal structure, such an observation is not germane to the claimed method.

The Hasegawa et al. patent does not anticipate the claims of the present application, nor does it even suggest the claimed method in a Section 103(a) sense. Accordingly, allowance of Claims 1-3 appears to be in order.

Early and favorable action on the claims in this case are thus earnestly solicited.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #381NP/50366).

Respectfully submitted,

August 13, 2002

James F. McKeown
Registration No. 25,406

CROWELL & MORING, LLP
P.O. Box 14300
Washington, DC 20044-4300
Telephone No.: (202) 624-2500
Facsimile No.: (202) 628-8844

JFM/acd
56207.440

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 2, line 17 to Page 3, line 12:

The RPV dealt by the above conventional art is a large scale structural body having height of about 25m, diameter of about 6m and weight reaching [upto] up to about 1000 tons. When performing carrying out / carrying in work at the time of exchanging work of the RPV, it is required to keep a high standard of safety. For example, even when presuming a possible dropping of the RPV due to damage of such as a crane and hanging jig, it is required to take a measure to prevent beforehand a possible flying out of radio active materials from a nuclear reactor building to the outside thereof. In a boiling water type nuclear power generation plant, adjacent a nuclear reactor well in which the RPV is disposed a used fuel pool is arranged, in which an already [use] used fuel is stored. Further, at the time of exchange work of the RPV all of the fuels loaded in the reactor are displaced into the used fuel pool before carrying out the RPV. By means of taking out all of the fuels in the reactor, a surface dosage rate of the RPV can be reduced and a radiation exposure quantity for workers can be reduced. Thereby, an RPV exchange work can be performed with a high level of safety.

Page 8, line 21 to Page 9, line 10:

In a nuclear reactor building 3, a [nuclear reactor] primary containment vessel (PCV) 8 which contains an RPV 1 is provided. Above the PCV 8, a nuclear reactor well 5 is provided which is used for filling shield water for shielding

radioactive rays from a fuel 11 such as when exchanging the fuel (a fuel assembly) 11 and when taking out an internal reactor structural body (structural bodies in the RPV 1). Further, when exchanging the RPV 1, the RPV 1 is carried out / in from the nuclear reactor well 5. A machine and apparatus pool 7 which is for storing a taken out internal structural body 2 is provided adjacent the nuclear reactor well 5. A used fuel pool 6 for storing a used fuel 11 is provided adjacent the nuclear reactor well 5 and below an operation floor 4. In the used fuel pool 6 a fuel rack 11a for storing the used fuel 11 is provided.

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Amended) A method of [treating] handling a large scale structural body in which an opening portion is provided at a roof of a nuclear reactor building [and] , comprising the steps of providing a protective measure for a used fuel pool in a nuclear reactor well, and then carrying the large scale structural body [such as a nuclear reactor pressure vessel and an internal reactor structural body /[is carried out /] out or in through the opening portion [, wherein the carrying out / in of the large scale structural body is performed under a condition that a protective measure for a used fuel pool is provided in a nuclear reactor well].

3. (Amended) A method of claim 1, wherein the protective measure is provided with a cushioning member inside thereof for [relaxing] minimizing the effect of an impact of the large scale structural body.